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rapidly developing. This will make the treaty of living force, and keep the governments true to their pledges if they should manifest any tendency to ignore them.

That there is any obscure "politics" in the agreement seems altogether improbable. It is pure peace-making, in our judgment, so far as such a thing is possible in the present stage of progress; and both King Edward and Emperor William are entitled to the best construction that can be put upon their action in bringing it about. They have done a service of incalculable value in thus helping to perfect the conditions which will make it possible at an early date for the nations to take up the pressing and immediately urgent question of reduction of armaments, about which everybody is now thinking and even talking.

Nine treaties of obligatory arbitration signed since the first of October last—England four, France four, Italy two, Spain three, Holland two, Germany, Denmark and Portugal one each! It is nearly impossible to realize how much this means. It signifies unmistakably that the old order of international distrust and chaos and war is on the point of a general break-up, and that the new order of unfeigned friendship and organized, unbroken coöperation is already far advanced.

It will not be long before the beneficent forces which have thus bound Germany and Great Britain and the other nations of Western Europe, and some of the nations of South America, in the bonds of peace, will draw their white line across the Alsace-Lorraine country, and this land of hatred and blood will be sealed with the signet-ring of peace. Shall we see this within twelve months? He would be a rash man, as things are now going, who should say that we shall not see it within that time.

The "Malacca" Incident.

The seizure of the British ship "Malacca" in the Red Sea by a Russian vessel and the feeling aroused thereby in England have brought out afresh the essential lawlessness of war and some of the grave evils and perils that always stalk in its wake.

There has grown up among the nations, in the slow progress of civilization, a body of precedents, customs and common understandings, supplemented in certain directions by written agreements, which we call international law. This law is a recognized part of the common law of all the civilized nations, and is considered at all ordinary times as binding upon them as the municipal common law of the countries themselves. In time of peace almost no difficulty is experienced in securing general observance of all the well-understood principles of this law of nations. Every government prides itself on its strict adherence thereto. In war time there is

more than usual talk about it, both by belligerents and neutrals, and each nation, however loose it may be in its own conduct, expects every other to observe punctiliously all its prescriptions.

But incidents like the "Malacca" seizure, and others which have followed it, make clear again the fact that war has in itself no respect for law of any kind. When the war spirit is on, and serious emergencies arise, violence smites everything before it in order to cripple the adversary; or would do so but for the fear of being met by superior violence.

Russian officers put their own construction on the meaning of international law as applied to seizure and search of ships supposed to be carrying support to the enemy, just as the Japanese did in regard to declaration of war before opening hostilities, in order to strike their unsuspecting enemy a heavy blow in the dark. If Russia, or rather the naval commanders, all of whom are supposed to be peculiarly well instructed in the principles of international maritime law, has later manifested a disposition to be less rash in the seizure and sinking of the ships of neutrals carrying goods to Japan, it is not because of fidelity to international law, but through the government's fear of rupture with England and of irritating other friendly neutral powers. Left to themselves the Russian naval officers would, there is little doubt, have gone much further than they have gone, in order to break the conquering might of their foe. The law of nations would have been interpreted by them to suit their own necessities, or ignored entirely, just as certain laws of war were deliberately disregarded by the British forces in South Africa and by the American forces, at times, in the Philippines, when a troublesome and annoying foe could not otherwise, they thought, be reduced to submission.

Russia is probably not worse in this respect than any other great power would be in like circumstances. Japan, in the same straits as Russia has so far been in, would doubtless have resorted to the same or kindred rash measures if she had dared to do so in the face of the Western powers.

On the other hand, the same lawlessness of spirit, if not of deed, has manifested itself in England over the seizure of British ships by the Russian cruisers. English press comment has shown unmistakably that Englishmen are disposed to put their own construction on international law, or to disregard it altogether. These comments have revealed a disposition not to allow Russia the benefit of even the well-recognized principles of public law. The enraged Britishers would insist on every British merchantman landing her cargo at Japanese ports, however full of contraband of war she might be, and that the British fleet should sink any ship of war interfering in the least with her. Now, this unwillingness to allow another the benefit of a well-recognized method of

procedure under international law is as essentially lawlessness as the actual violation of the law in other directions.

We are not speaking here of the conduct of the responsible governments of Russia and of Great Britain. These have been, through the entire course of the incidents, "very proper" and "conciliatory," and there is no probability that any serious misunderstanding between them will be occasioned. We have only been pointing out that war,—a lawless thing in itself,—discarding all the common principles of morality ordinarily in force among men, produces inevitably among the peoples engaging in it a spirit of lawlessness, which is liable to break out anywhere where temptation happens to press a little sorely. The only way to prevent this side lawlessness is to prevent the central lawlessness.

Another fact has been illustrated anew by these incidents; that is, the extreme difficulty of ever getting rid of the prejudices and hatreds engendered and left behind by war. It has been fifty years since England and Russia were engaged in the Crimean struggle. The whole British nation was at that time carried away with madness against the Czar's country. The utterances of the British press toward Russia within the last month have disclosed the red-hot embers of the old passion lying only a little concealed. One had begun to hope that the old prejudice and dislike were largely gone and that a more human and Christian spirit was taking its place. And we still think that there has been great gain in this direction. But the events to which we are alluding show how little it would take to stir up the waning embers and set the whole British structure again on fire with hatred of Russia.

There is nothing in human character more depraved and despicable than the hatred of man by man. And that is one of the evil fruits which war is always producing and propagating.

All They that Take Dynamite shall Perish with Dynamite.

"I do not wonder at his assassination, though I deeply lament it," is what ex-Ambassador Andrew D. White is reported to have said the day after the news came of the assassination of Mr. von Plehve, the Russian Minister of the Interior.

The feeling that prompted that utterance is probably shared by most of those who are well informed as to the course of recent events in Russia. The assassination is a great crime, and can be justified neither on ethical grounds nor on those of political utility. The brutal killing of a minister of state, whether done for anarchistic reasons or by way of retaliation for wrongs and injustices which he had occasioned, does not remedy the evils of which complaint is justly made. The general tendency has

always been to make them worse. Violence begets violence, from above downwards, as well as from below upwards, and the men who grow desperate and resort to it must not wonder if they find themselves at once more hopelessly enmeshed in the toils of severe and relentless oppression. That, it is to be feared, will be the result of the assassination of von Plehve, as it was the result of the assassination of his predecessor, and of the more recent assassination of the Governor-General of Finland. Already an even severer man than the late minister is talked of as his successor.

On the other hand, von Plehve has reaped as he sowed, and one cannot wonder at it. He was generally believed to have been responsible for the horrible massacres of the Jews at Kishineff. In carrying into effect the monstrous policy adopted by the government for crushing out the ancient liberties of Finland, one of the grossest political crimes of modern times, he held the stroke oar. If the reports that have come to us about him are true, there was nothing too heartless for him to have performed in order to bring about "pacification" and mute submission to the domination of the Russian oligarchy.

The natural fruit of this policy has been, as was clearly foreseen, the spirit of hatred and revenge. Finland, from being a quiet, loyal province, when allowed by Russia her ancient local rights and independent institutions, has quickly been transformed into a seething mass of rebellious and vindictive spirits, over whom Russia will be hereafter able to maintain her sway only by the harshest and most tyrannical measures.

Even if the murderer of von Plehve was not a Finn, what we have said is nevertheless pertinent. For the tyrannical and repressive methods of the Russian government,—the oligarchical State Council,—whose victim the Czar is, have sowed the seeds of discontent and discord and violence throughout the empire. It is in the soil of such methods that hate and anarchy and nihilism and the spirit of murder naturally spring up and flourish, and the Russian governmental leaders will continue to be the victims of dynamite so long as they cling to this totally un-Christian and inhuman policy. No files of soldiers, however long or deep or fierce, will be able to prevent them from being shot down like common dogs, or blown into fragments by diabolical bombs such as the government itself makes and stores in its arsenals to destroy its own enemies with.

There is but one way out of the dreadful *impasse*. The stern system of brute domination and violence employed to secure submission to a self-assumed tyranny has failed again, as it has always failed. The weakest and most insignificant men can easily find ways of turning its most wisely contrived and cunning defenses, and of destroying its most shining